

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A microarray strip containing microarrays, the microarray strip comprising:

a pocket strip having a number of pockets;

a number of microarrays, each pocket of the pocket strip containing a microarray;

and

a cover strip bonded to the pocket strip to create sealed chambers, each sealed chamber containing a microarray.

2. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein the pocket strip and cover strip are plastic and the cover strip is bonded to the pocket strip by heat sealing.

3. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein the pocket strip is a polymer/metal foil laminate.

4. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein the cover strip is a metal foil.

5. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 further including regularly spaced features that facilitate automatic translation and positioning of the microarray strip.

6. (original) The microarray strip of claim 5 wherein the regularly spaced features comprise two sets of tractor feed perforations along each edge of the microarray strip.

7. (currently amended) The microarray strip of claim 5 wherein the regularly spaced features comprise regularly spaced optical features that can be detected by an optical detector or sensor.

8. (original) The microarray strip of claim 5 wherein the regularly spaced features comprise regularly spaced features that engage with complementary features of a mechanical translation and positioning mechanism.

9. (original) The microarray strip of claim 5 wherein the regularly spaced features comprise regularly spaced electromechanical features that can be detected by sensors within an electromechanical translation and positioning mechanism.

10. (original) The microarray strip of claim 5 wherein the regularly spaced features comprise regularly spaced features that can be detected by sensors to direct an electromechanical translating and positioning mechanism to translate and position the microarray strip.

11. (previously presented) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein the cover strip is bonded to the pocket strip via an adhesive sealant.

12. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein the cover strip is bonded to the pocket strip via mechanical force applied to complementary molded features of the pocket strip and cover strip.

13. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein the sealed chambers prevent exchange of liquid and vapor phase substances between the interior of the sealed chambers and the external environment.

14. (original) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein each pocket has molded features for positioning and orienting a microarray within the pocket.

15. (previously presented) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein, following insertion of a microarray into a pocket and bonding of a cover strip over the pocket, a gap remains between the upper surface of the microarray and the inner surface of the cover strip.

16. (previously presented) The microarray strip of claim 1 wherein, following ~~of~~ insertion of a microarray into a pocket, gaps remain between surfaces of the microarray and the bottom and side surfaces of the pocket to create a well into which solutions can be introduced.

17. (previously presented) The microarray strip of claim 16 further including one or more septa affixed to a surface of the cover strip directly above the well, providing resealable ports through which solutions and gasses can be introduced into the well and through which solutions and gasses can be extracted from the well.

18. (original) A method for packaging a number of microarrays, the method comprising:
providing a pocket strip having a series of pockets;
positioning the microarrays into pockets of the pocket strip; and
bonding a cover strip onto the pocket strip to seal the microarrays within the pockets, thereby creating a microarray strip.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 further including providing regularly spaced features along the microarray strip that are employed to translate and position the microarray strip within automated systems.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 further including providing septa affixed to the cover strip as resealable ports for introducing solutions and gasses into, and extracting solutions and gasses from, the sealed pockets containing microarrays.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 further including providing support features within the pockets of the microarray strip for positioning and orienting microarrays within the pockets.

Claims 22-31 (cancelled)